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Ismāʿīlī studies, though often limiting themselves to a Marxist class struggle framework.

In Syria, ʿĀrif Tāmir (1921–1998), of the small Muḥammad-Shāhī Nizārī community there, made the Ismāʿīlī texts of Syrian provenance available to scholars, albeit often in faulty forms, as did his Qāsim-Shāhī Nizārī compatriot Muṣṭafā Ghālib (1923–1981). At the same time, several Egyptian scholars, such as Ḥasan Ibrāhīm Ḥasan (1892–1968), Jamāl al-Dīn al-Shayyāl (1911–1967), Muḥammad Jamāl al-Dīn Surūr (1911–1992) and ʿAbd al-Munʿim Mājid (1920–1999), made further contributions to Fāṭimid studies. Ivanow himself, as well as Bernard Lewis, had earlier produced important studies on the Ismāʿīlī background to Fāṭimid rule. Meanwhile, Yves Marquet had embarked on a lifelong study of the Ikhwān al-Ṣafāʾ and their *Rasāʾil*. Later, Alessandro Bausani (1921–1988) and his student at Naples University, Carmela Baffioni, among others, contributed to the study of the Ikhwān al-Ṣafāʾ, while Abbas Hamdani expounded his own distinct hypothesis on the authorship and dating of the *Rasāʾil* in a corpus of articles.

By the 1950s, progress in Ismāʿīlī studies had enabled Marshall G. S. Hodgson (1922–1968) to produce the first comprehensive and scholarly study of the Nizārīs of the Alamūt period, unfortunately mistitled as *The Order of Assassins*. Soon, others representing a new generation of scholars, notably Samuel M. Stern (1920–1969) and Wilferd Madelung,[106] produced major original studies, especially on the early Ismāʿīlīs and their relations with the dissident Qarmaṭīs. Madelung also summed up the present state of scholarship on Ismāʿīlī history in his article 'Ismāʿīliyya' published in 1973 in the new edition of *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*. Progress in Ismāʿīlī studies has proceeded at a rapid pace during the last few decades through the efforts of yet another generation of scholars, including Ismail K. Poonawala, Heinz Halm, Paul E. Walker, Azim Nanji, Thierry Bianquis, Christian Jambet, Michael Brett, Yaacov Lev, Farhat Dachraoui and Mohammed Yalaoui, some of whom have specialized in Fāṭimid studies. The modern progress in the recovery and study of Ismāʿīlī texts is well reflected in Professor Poonawala's monumental catalogue, which identifies some 1300 titles written by more than 200 authors.[107] Meanwhile, the Satpanth tradition of the Nizārī Khojas, as reflected in their *ginān* devotional literature, provided another specialized area of research within Ismāʿīlī studies. Many Ismāʿīlī texts have now been published in critical editions, while an increasing number of secondary studies on various aspects of Ismāʿīlism have been produced by at least three successive generations of scholars, as documented in this author's bibliography.[108]

Modern progress in Ismāʿīlī studies has received steady impetus from the recovery, or accessibility, of more Ismāʿīlī manuscripts, including the library holdings at the American University of Beirut and Tübingen University, amongst others. The vast Arabic manuscript collections of the Dāʾūdī Ṭayyibī Bohra libraries at

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the holders of the *daʿwa* ranks below the *ḥujja*, while the weak group was restricted to the ordinary members of the community, the *mustajīb*s. Both factions of the *ahl-i tarattub* were expected to concentrate on the inner meaning of the so-called *khalqī* commandments of the *sharīʿa*, such as those related to praying, fasting, the *ḥajj* pilgrimage and so forth, especially when not practising *taqiyya*.[102] Finally, the *ahl-i vaḥdat* category consisted of the *ḥujja* alone. Only the *ḥujja* had truly entered the spiritual realm of the *ḥaqīqa*. The paradisal state made available to the Nizārīs of the Alamūt period by the announcement of the *qiyāma* could now, in the Anjudān period, be enjoyed by a single person, the most trusted associate of the imam.

The Nizārī Khojas and Satpanth Ismāʿīlism

In the meantime, the Nizārī *daʿwa* had spread successfully on the Indian subcontinent.[103] The origins and early development of Nizārī Ismāʿīlism in India remain rather obscure owing to the absence of reliable sources. For the earliest phase of Nizārī activities in India, we have to rely almost exclusively on the traditional accounts of the Nizārīs of South Asia, the Khojas, as expressed in their indigenous religious literature, the *ginān*s. The Nizārī Khojas, it may be added, always acknowledged the imams of the Qāsim-Shāhī Nizārī line. The *ginān*s are often inaccurate on chronological details and on the sequence of events, frequently mixing legend with reality. According to these accounts, the *daʿwa* in India was initiated by emissaries or *pīr*s despatched by the Nizārī imams from Persia. These emissaries, who probably began their missionary work during the late Alamūt period, at first concentrated their efforts chiefly in Sind.[104] It may be noted that the available information on the post-Alamūt *daʿwa* activities in India stem solely from the traditions preserved by the followers of the Qāsim-Shāhī line of imams and the Imām-Shāhīs who split off from the community.

Satgur Nūr is reported to have been the earliest Nizārī missionary or *pīr* sent from Persia to India, where the specific form of Nizārī Ismāʿīlism developed indigenously became known as Satpanth (*sat panth*) or the 'true path' (to salvation), a term used by Khojas and appearing throughout their *ginān*s.[105] According to the traditions, Satgur Nūr was mainly active in Pātan, Gujarāt. His shrine is located at Nawsarī near Sūrat, and his tombstone is dated 487/1094. The next important *pīr* is Shams al-Dīn, whose activities centred on Sind. In most of the religious poetry ascribed to him, Qāsim Shāh is named as the imam of his time.[106] Pīr Shams al-Dīn thus seems to have flourished in the middle of the 8th/14th century. He was particularly active in Multān and Uchchh, in Sind, and his mausoleum at Multān is locally known as that of Shams-i Tabrīz. The Nizārī community of the Shamsīs, who now acknowledge the Aga Khan and live as

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goldsmiths chiefly in Multān and elsewhere in Panjāb, claim to have been converted by Pīr Shams al-Dīn. The work of Shams al-Dīn was continued by his son and grandson, Nāṣir al-Dīn and Shihāb (or Ṣāḥib) al-Dīn. Almost nothing is known about these two *pīr*s, who occupy the twenty-first and twenty-second places on the traditional lists of *pīr*s; it is merely reported that they conducted the *daʿwa* in secret. Pīr Shihāb al-Dīn was, in turn, succeeded by his son Ṣadr al-Dīn. By that time in the post-Alamūt period, the chief Nizārī *pīr*s in India had acquired a certain degree of autonomy and had also established a hereditary dynasty.

Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn, to whom the largest number of *ginān*s is attributed, played a key role in the propagation and organization of the *daʿwa* in India. He is reported to have died sometime between 770/1369 and 819/1416.[107] He was thus contemporary with the Imam Islām Shāh.[108] Ṣadr al-Dīn converted large numbers of Hindus from the Lohana trading caste and gave them the name of Khoja, derived from the Persian word *khwāja*, an honorary title meaning lord or master. This name corresponded to the Hindu term *ṭhākur* (or *ṭhākkar*), meaning master, by which the Hindu Lohanas were addressed, since they were regarded as Kshatriyas. The Lohanas and Khojas still use the Hindu designation amongst themselves. Ṣadr al-Dīn is credited with building the first *jamāʿat-khāna* (literally, community house) in Kotri, Sind, for the religious and communal activities of the Khojas. Subsequently, he established two other Nizārī centres in Panjāb and Kashmir and appointed their *mukhi*s or leaders. The term *mukhi* (pronounced *mukī*) is derived from the Sanskrit word *mūkhya*, meaning most important or chief. Ṣadr al-Dīn, thus, laid the foundation of the communal organization of the Indian Nizārīs who henceforth became known mainly as Khojas. In time, he extended the *daʿwa* to Gujarāt and won success amongst the Lohanas and other trading Hindu castes of that region. The centre of Ṣadr al-Dīn's activities, however, remained in Uchchh, from where he conducted the *daʿwa* somewhat more openly. It may be noted in passing that Sind was at the time ruled by the Sammas, who around 752/1351 had succeeded the Sūmras who adhered to Ismāʿīlism. The Sūmras themselves had ruled from Thatta for almost three centuries from 443/1051. The later members of the Sūmra dynasty were probably influenced by the Nizārī *daʿwa* in Sind whilst maintaining an independent Ismāʿīlī tradition of their own, but the Sammas soon became Sunnī Muslims.[109] Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn evidently visited the Imam Islām Shāh in Persia to submit to him the *dassondh* or tithes collected from the Nizārī community of India. Ṣadr al-Dīn's shrine is located near Jetpur, in the vicinity of Uchchh, to the south of Multān. The overseers of this shrine now consider themselves as Twelver Shīʿīs and refer to the *pīr* as Ḥājjī Ṣadr Shāh.

Ṣadr al-Dīn was succeeded as *pīr* by his eldest son Ḥasan Kabīr al-Dīn. According to a well-known hagiographical work written in India by ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq b. Sayf al-Dīn Dihlawī (d. 1052/1642), Kabīr al-Dīn travelled extensively before settling

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down in Uchchh, which served as the seat of the Satpanth *daʿwa* in India.[110] He too apparently visited the contemporary imam in Persia and converted a large number of Hindus during his tenure. The death dates mentioned for this *pīr* vary from 853/1449 to 896/1490–1491, but most probably he died around 875/1470. This year is mentioned in the as-yet unpublished *Manāzil al-aqṭāb*, the history of the Imām-Shāhī sect compiled around 1237/1821 in Gujarāt by Qāḍī Raḥmat Allāh b. Ghulām Muṣṭafā.[111] Kabīr al-Dīn's shrine is outside Uchchh and is locally known as Ḥasan Daryā. It is interesting to note that this *pīr* is reported to have been affiliated with the Suhrawardī Sufi order, which was prevalent at the time in the region of Multān. In fact, Pīr Kabīr al-Dīn's name appears in the list of the *shaykh*s of this Sufi *ṭarīqa*.[112] Indeed, the available evidence reveals that in India, too, the Nizārīs developed close relations with Sufism. Multān and Uchchh in Sind, in addition to serving as centres of Satpanth Ismāʿīlī activities, were the headquarters of the Suhrawardī and Qādirī Sufi orders. The Suhrawardiyya was the most important Sufi order of Sind during the 7th–8th/13th–14th centuries, while the Qādirīs began to acquire prominence in the 9th/15th century. The same doctrinal affinities that existed between Persian Ismāʿīlism and Sufism also existed between Satpanth Ismāʿīlism and Sufism in India. As a result, close relations developed between these two esoteric traditions in South Asia, especially in Sind where both Satpanth and Sufi traditions had deep roots. The adoption of Sufi terminology, such as *murshid* and *murīd*, by the Nizārī Khoja community as well as strong parallels between the poetic and mystical expressions found in the *ginān*s and in Sufi poetry composed in Panjābī and Sindhī facilitated Satpanth–Sufi relations.

Thus, Nizārī Khojas were able to represent themselves for extended periods as one of the many mystically oriented communities of Sind, where such communities existed among both the predominantly Sunnī Muslim and Hindu milieux. This enabled the Khojas to blend more readily into the religious, cultural and social structure of Sind, attracting less attention as Ismāʿīlīs and escaping persecution by the region's Sunnī rulers. However, in contrast to the situation in Persia, the *pīr*s and their Khoja followers may not have consciously and deliberately developed their Sufi connections for *taqiyya* purposes. The Nizārī Khojas, by contrast to their co-religionists in Persia, were already safeguarded against Sunnī persecution by the Hindu elements which were integral parts of their Satpanth tradition. More cannot be said in our present state of knowledge on Ismāʿīlī–Sufi interactions in South Asia. It may be added that close relations between the Khojas and Sufis of India in post-Alamūt times are also attested to by a lengthy didactic poem in medieval Hindustani known as *Bujh Nirañjan* (*Knowledge of the One*). As Ali Asani has shown,[113] this long poem about the mystical path actually originated in the Qādirī Sufi circles of Sind and then entered the *ginān*

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literature of the Khojas, who attribute it to Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn. The Khoja appropriation of this work was doubtless facilitated by the fact that its mystical themes and terms readily lent themselves to Ismāʿīlī interpretations even though there are no specifically Ismāʿīlī elements in this poem.

After Ḥasan Kabīr al-Dīn, the Nizārī Khoja community began to experience internal dissensions which eventually led to an important schism. Ḥasan Kabīr al-Dīn is said to have had eighteen sons, but his brother Tāj al-Dīn was appointed as the next *pīr* by the Nizārī imam, perhaps as a further measure to weaken the hereditary authority of the *pīr*s. This appointment was opposed by some of Kabīr al-Dīn's sons, who were at the time also quarrelling amongst themselves. When Tāj al-Dīn returned from a visit to the imam in Persia, where he had gone to deliver the tithes (*dassondh*) of the Khojas, he was accused by his nephews of embezzling a portion of the religious dues. Thereupon, the *pīr* is said either to have died of grief or committed suicide. He died towards the end of the 9th/15th century, not long after Kabīr al-Dīn. His grave is located in Jhun in Sind. He is not recognized as a *pīr* by the later Imām-Shāhīs.

After Tāj al-Dīn, Imām al-Dīn ʿAbd Raḥīm b. Ḥasan, better known as Imām Shāh, a son of Kabīr al-Dīn and the eponym of the Imām-Shāhī sect, tried in vain to succeed to the leadership of the Nizārī Khojas in Sind.[114] Later, he saw the imam in Persia but was not designated by him to the position of *pīr*.[115] On returning to India, Imām Shāh settled in Gujarāt where he spent the rest of his life and had much success in converting the local Hindus, especially from amongst the agricultural communities, to Satpanth Ismāʿīlism. According to some legendary accounts, he also converted the sultan of Gujarāt, Maḥmūd Begrā (863–917/1459–1511), who gave his daughter in marriage to Imām Shāh's eldest son Nar Muḥammad. Imām Shāh, who according to some unreliable accounts seceded from the Nizārī community and himself became the founder of the Imām-Shāhī sect, is not recognized as a *pīr* by the Nizārī Khojas, who regard him merely as a *sayyid*. He died in 919/1513 in Pīrāna, the town founded by him near Aḥmadābād, where his shrine is located. Meanwhile, owing to continuing conflicts in the family of Pīr Ḥasan Kabīr al-Dīn and aiming to assert his own direct control, the imam had not appointed any more new *pīr*s after Tāj al-Dīn. Instead, a book of guidance, occupying the twenty-sixth place on the traditional lists of *pīr*s, was sent to the Nizārī Khoja community. This book, the already-noted *Pandiyāt-i javānmardī* containing the religious admonitions of Imam Mustanṣir bi'llāh II, appears to have reached Sind around the middle of the 10th/16th century. At the time, it will be recalled, the Qāsim-Shāhī imams were successfully endeavouring to assert their authority over the Nizārī communities of India and other regions. Khayrkhwāh, for instance, refers to the pilgrimages of the Indian *dāʿī*s for seeing the imam at Anjudān, also noting that the Nizārī Khojas by then

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greatly outnumbered their Persian co-religionists.[116] The *Pandiyāt-i javānmardī* was in due course translated into Sindhī and Gujarātī and transcribed in Khojkī for the benefit of the Nizārī Khojas.

Meanwhile, Imām Shāh had been succeeded in Gujarāt by his son Nar (Nūr) Muḥammad. Imām Shāh himself had apparently remained loyal to the imams in Persia, but Nar Muḥammad seceded from the Nizārī Khoja community, founding an independent sect known as the Imām-Shāhīs, named after his father. At an unknown date not long after 919/1513, Nar Muḥammad demanded that the *dassondh* or tithes should henceforth be delivered to him in Gujarāt, instead of being sent through Sind to the imam in Persia. Nar Muḥammad now in fact claimed the imamate for himself, and, retrospectively, for his father by claiming to represent the incarnation of the imam, a concept familiar to Hindus and the contemporary Khojas. This caused a schism in the Nizārī community of Gujarāt. In particular, Nar Muḥammad's requests and claims were rejected by a certain Kheta, who was the *mukhi* of some 18,000 converted Hindus. But the majority of Nar Muḥammad's followers in Gujarāt sided with him and formed the separate Imām-Shāhī sect, also known as Satpanthī. A minority of Nar Muḥammad's earlier followers, together with the bulk of the Nizārīs of Gujarāt, remained loyal to the Nizārī imams and the main Satpanth *daʿwa* in India. Nar Muḥammad died in 940/1533–1534, and was buried in his father's mausoleum in Pīrāna. The Imām-Shāhīs, who produced their own version of the *ginān*s, soon denied any connection with Ismāʿīlism, though they continued to acknowledge the line of the Ismāʿīlī imams until Islām Shāh, the thirtieth Qāsim-Shāhī Nizārī imam. They do not, however, recognize some of the Nizārī imams, such as Rukn al-Dīn Khurshāh, Muḥammad b. Islām Shāh, and the latter's successors until the schism. They claim that the early *pīr*s, until Ḥasan Kabīr al-Dīn, were in fact Twelver Shīʿīs. They do not acknowledge Tāj al-Dīn as one of their *pīr*s, and Nar Muḥammad is regarded as their last imam.

After Nar Muḥammad, there occurred several splits in the Imām-Shāhī community owing to succession disputes over the position of the *pīr*. Different factions followed different lines of *pīr*s from amongst Nar Muḥammad's descendants. In Awrangzīb's reign, the *sajjāda-nishīn* or leader of the Imām-Shāhī community centred in Pīrāna was a certain Shāhjī Mīrān Shāh. In 1067/1657, he succeeded his father, Muḥammad Shāh, a descendant of Nar Muḥammad's son Saʿīd Khān, as the *pīr* of the so-called Āṭhṭhiyā branch of the sect. Having heard about the heretical beliefs of Shāhjī, Awrangzīb summoned the aged saint to have his beliefs examined by the Sunnī jurists of his court. Shāhjī was forced to set off for Awrangzīb's court by the local governor of Gujarāt. But he died on the way, possibly poisoning himself, near Pīrāna or in Aḥmadābād. Thereupon, Shāhjī's numerous followers, especially from amongst the Matiya Kanbis caste, launched

Awrangzib = Aurangzeb

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a revolt and seized the fort of Broach.[117] They proclaimed Shāhjī Mīrān's son and successor, Sayyid Muḥammad Shāh (d. ca. 1130/1718), as king of Broach. This rebellion, which occurred around 1100/1688–1689, was eventually suppressed by Awrangzīb. The leadership of this Imām-Shāhī group remained in the hands of Shāhjī's direct descendants until Bāqir ʿAlī, the last *pīr* of the Āṭhṭhiyā, who died around 1251/1835. Shāhjī Mīrān's wife, Rājī Ṭāhira, founded a separate branch of the Imām-Shāhīs. The Imām-Shāhīs, through their various branches, have tended to revert towards Hinduism. The adherents of this syncretist sect, who are now mainly located in the rural communities of Gujarāt, Khāndesh and western Madhya Pradesh, near Burhānpūr, consider themselves chiefly as Twelver Shīʿīs or Sunnīs rather than Ismāʿīlīs.

In the aftermath of the dissensions in the Khoja community, the imams evidently appointed one more *pīr*, after Taj al-Dīn (and the *Pandiyāt-i javānmardī*). This *pīr*, named Dādū, was sent in the second half of the 10th/16th century to Sind for the purpose of preventing the reversion of the Nizārī Khojas to Hinduism or their conversion to Sunnism, the dominant religions of the contemporary Indo-Muslim society. Around 992/1584, however, Dādū was obliged to leave for Navanagar (Jamnagar) in Gujarāt, where he settled down with some of the Sindhī Nizārīs who had fled with him. Subsequently, Dādū moved to Bhuj, where he died in 1001/1593. Dādū played an important role in reorganizing the Indian Nizārī community and in strengthening the ties of that community with the imam and the central *daʿwa* headquarters in Anjudān. Dādū's name is, however, omitted from the later lists of the Satpanth *pīr*s. With the ending of the line of *pīr*s, the imams came to be represented locally in India by *wakīl*s and *bāwā*s. The latter term probably represents the Khojkī pronunciation of the Turkish and Persian word *bābā*, meaning father, and used also as an honorific for older men. Dissatisfied with the dynasty of *pīr*s, the imams of the Anjudān period now attempted to acquire more direct control over the Nizārī Khojas. One of the most important duties of the *wakīl* and other local representatives of the imams was the collection of the religious dues and their proper transference to the central treasury of the *daʿwa* in Persia, located at the imam's place of residence. At the same time, some local families of Sayyids, that is, descendants of Pīr Ḥasan Kabīr al-Dīn, maintained their influence in the Khoja community, sometimes holding the position of *wakīl*. Remaining faithful to the imams, they also conducted the *daʿwa* on their behalf and performed certain teaching functions in the Khoja community. The Kadiwala Sayyids, who also composed *ginān*s, represent one of the most important families of such Sayyids. They are still active in Sind. Their ancestor, Sayyid Fāḍil Shāh, a descendant of Raḥmat Allāh b. Ḥasan Kabīr al-Dīn, was originally active in the town of Kadi in Cutch, Gujarāt, around the middle of the 11th/17th century, before the family moved to Sind. In Sind, the family eventually settled

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around 1194/1780 in Tando Muḥammad Khān, where the Kadiwala Sayyids still reside.

Meanwhile, the Nizārī *daʿwa* continued in Gujarāt. One group of Khojas in Gujarāt, who remained loyal to the imams and their representatives in India, came to be known as Mōmnas, a designation derived from the word *muʾmin*. This term has also been used in reference to some of the Imām-Shāhī groups.[118] The Nizārī Mōmnas allege that in time they came to obey the Kadiwala Sayyid Fāḍil Shāh, who collected their tithes and sent them to Persia. Pīr Mashāyikh and Ḥasan Pīr, sons of Sayyid Fāḍil, played important roles amongst the Nizārī Mōmnas of northern Gujarāt. According to the Nizārī Mōmna tradition, Mashāyikh was designated as the local head of the Nizārī *jamāʿat* or community in northern Gujarāt, where he attempted to suppress the Hindu practices of the Khojas. Mashāyikh eventually settled down in Aḥmadābād and asserted his independence from the *daʿwa* headquarters in Anjudān. He kept the tithes collected in the community for himself and also renounced his allegiance to the imam in Persia. Indeed, some sources report that he even converted to Sunnism and visited Awrangzīb in the Deccan. Pīr Mashāyikh is also said to have sided with this Mughal emperor against the Shīʿī rulers of Bījāpūr. Many of Mashāyikh's adherents, who later followed his descendants, converted to Sunnism, while the Nizārī Mōmnas came to support the Kadiwala Sayyids. Pīr Mashāyikh died in 1108/1697 in Aḥmadābād, and his followers later quarrelled as to whether he had been a Sunnī or a Shīʿī, causing further divisions. The matter is obscure, as Mashāyikh's writings reflect both Sunnī and Shīʿī tendencies. Azim Nanji has made the interesting suggestion that Pīr Mashāyikh may in fact have transferred his allegiance to the Muḥammad-Shāhī Nizārī imams, who then resided in the Deccan, professing Sunnism for the purpose of *taqiyya*.[119] Pīr Mashāyikh's brother Ḥasan, who was active in Kathiawar, remained loyal to the Nizārī imam and became the saint of the Nizārī Mōmnas. In addition to his mausoleum in Thanapipli near Jūnāgarh, the Nizārī Khojas and Mōmnas in 1129/1717 constructed a shrine in Ganod, Gujarāt, as a tribute to Ḥasan Pīr. The Mōmnas, now found chiefly in Gujarāt, are sub-divided into various groups adhering to Sunnism, Twelver Shīʿism, Nizārī Shīʿism, and admixtures of these traditions.

The origins and early development of the particular form of Ismāʿīlism known as Satpanth, and its religious literature, the *ginān*s, remain obscure. In particular, it not known whether Satpanth Ismāʿīlism as it developed in South Asia resulted from the conversion policies of the early *pīr*s or whether it represented an indigenous tradition that had evolved gradually over several centuries from Fāṭimid times, with the Nizārī missionaries or preacher-saints adapting their preaching to an existing religious situation. The weight of evidence favours the latter alternative. Ismāʿīlism survived in a subdued form in Sind after the collapse of the

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Ismāʿīlī principality of Multān and the persecution of the Ismāʿīlīs there by Sultan Maḥmūd of Ghazna at the beginning of the 5th/11th century. But nothing is known about its particular form, while the Ismāʿīlīs of Sind and surrounding areas evidently remained outside the Nizārī–Mustaʿlī boundaries until the late Alamūt period, which was similar to the situation of the Central Asian Ismāʿīlīs. Under the circumstances, modern scholars of Satpanth have generally attributed the mixed, Hindu–Muslim, interfacing of this Ismāʿīlī tradition to the preaching strategy of the *pīr*s, who are held to have designed suitable Hindu-oriented policies for the purpose of converting Hindus to Ismāʿīlism.[120] According to this view, not readily substantiable on the basis of available evidence, Satpanth Ismāʿīlism is said to have evolved primarily out of the ingenious conversion policies of *pīr*s, who aimed to make their message understandable and attractive to a Hindu audience concentrated mainly in rural areas. Be that as it may, Satpanth Ismāʿīlism does represent an indigenous tradition reflecting certain historical, social, cultural and political circumstances prevailing in medieval India, especially in Sind and other northern areas of the subcontinent. The background of Satpanth, especially in terms of thematic admixtures, may indeed have already existed by the time the Nizārī *pīr*s became active in Sind in the late Alamūt period. Thus, the *pīr*s themselves may have adapted their policies to an existing and ongoing situation.

At any rate, the Nizārī *daʿwa* was reinvigorated in Sind by a succession of *pīr*s, culminating in the successes of the Anjudān period when the imams played a more direct role in the affairs of the Nizārī Khoja community. On the evidence of the *ginān*s, however, the *pīr*s did attempt to maximize the appeal of their preaching in a Hindu ambience, for the Nizārī *daʿwa* in India was addressed mainly to the rural, and largely uneducated, lower castes. Therefore, the *pīr*s from early on turned to Indian vernaculars, rather than the Arabic and Persian used by the educated classes, in order to enhance the effectiveness and popularity of their message. For the same reason, the *pīr*s used Hindu idioms and mythology, interfacing their Islamic and Ismāʿīlī tenets with myths, images and symbols already familiar to the Hindus. In other words, according to this view, the *pīr*s adopted a strategy of acculturation that proved very successful and won large numbers of converts from amongst Sind's lower castes. In time, Satpanth Ismāʿīlism developed its own set of themes and theological concepts emanating from an interfacing of Hinduism with Ismāʿīlī Shīʿism and a number of other traditions and mystical movements prevalent in the Indo-Muslim milieux of India, including Sufism, Tantrism and the Bhakti tradition.

The Hindu cover of the Nizārī Khojas, as expressed by Hindu elements in the Satpanth tradition, in addition to encouraging conversions, also served *taqiyya* purposes and made the Khojas less conspicuous in their predominantly Hindu

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and Sunnī environments. In a sense, then, Satpanth Ismāʿīlism represented a complex form of dissimulation and acculturation adapted to the religious, social, cultural and political realities of the Indian subcontinent. In this context, dissimulation meant something much more than the concealment of one's true religious identity or superficial adoption of an exterior guise. It involved, in fact, the creative application of *taqiyya* through a complex process of indigenization, adhesion and syncretism.[121] All this explains why the Satpanth tradition of the Nizārī Khojas differs significantly from the Nizārī traditions elaborated in Central Asia, Persia and Syria.

The Satpanth tradition drew on a multitude of indigenous concepts and motifs prevalent in the Indo-Muslim context. The teachings of Satpanth Ismāʿīlism are abundantly reflected in the *ginān* literature. The *pīr*s transformed Hindu mythology and motifs into narratives explaining their Ismāʿīlī teachings.[122] In particular, they expounded within a Hindu framework the doctrine of the imamate as held by the Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs of the post-*qiyāma* times. This found expression in an important *ginān* entitled *Dasa Avatāra*, which has been recorded in three separate versions attributed to Pīr Shams al-Dīn, Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn and Imām Shāh.[123] The *Dasa Avatāra*, which like other *ginān*s with strong Hindu influences is no longer in use in the Nizārī Khoja community, presents the imam as the long-awaited saviour within a Vaishnavite framework concerning the ten descents (*dasa avatāra*) of the Hindu deity Vishnu through the ages.

The *pīr*s condemned idol worship, but a variety of correspondences were established in some *ginān*s between Hindu and Islamic concepts and figures, facilitating the transformation of the religious identity of the converts from Hinduism to Satpanth Ismāʿīlism. The *pīr*s taught that it was only through recognition of the 'true path' (*sat panth*) that the converts would be liberated from the Hindu cycles of rebirth and attain salvation in Paradise. The Qurʾān was represented as the last of the Vedas or sacred scriptures, whose true meaning was known only to the *pīr*s representing the imams. The *ginān*s, indeed, portray the *pīr* as the 'true guide' (*sat guru*) who can lead the faithful in their spiritual quest in order to attain knowledge of the imam and the true path to salvation. All this explains the particular reverence the Nizārī Khojas hold for the *pīr*s and their teachings as expounded in the *ginān*s.

Satpanth Ismāʿīlism did not always evolve coherently and progressively in the Indian subcontinent. Recent research has shown that, in addition to secessionary movements like that of the Imām-Shāhīs, certain communities which originally may have adhered to Satpanth Ismāʿīlism did revert to Hinduism. For instance, this complex phenomenon seems to have occurred in the case of the Kāmaḍ or Kāmaḍiyya of Rajasthan, the untouchable worshippers of a deified saint known as Ramdev Pīr.[124] Removed from the religious centres of Satpanth in Uchchh

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and Multān, and perhaps originally converted only in a superficial or incomplete manner, the Kāmaḍ experienced a process of 're-Hinduization', redefining and shifting their identity. In the event, they completely forgot their Satpanth Ismāʿīlī heritage, while their devotional poems are replete with Ismāʿīlī references. As a different case of shifting identities, it may be noted that many isolated Persian Nizārī groups dissimulating as Twelver Shīʿīs eventually became fully integrated into their predominantly Twelver Shīʿī environment of post-Ṣafawid times.

The Muḥammad-Shāhī imams and the Nizārīs of Central Asia

The available information on the Muḥammad-Shāhī Nizārī imams and their *daʿwa* activities is meagre. The bulk of the Nizārī community in Syria adhered, until the latter part of the nineteenth century, to this line of imams. There were large numbers of Muḥammad-Shāhīs, at least through the 10th/16th century, in Persia, especially in Daylam, as well as in Afghanistan and the adjacent areas in Badakhshan and the upper Oxus. With the migration of the Muḥammad-Shāhī imams to India early in the 10th/16th century, this Nizārī subgroup acquired followers also on the Indian subcontinent for a few centuries. In the absence of adequate sectarian sources, however, most of the Muḥammad-Shāhī imams continue to remain obscure figures, with only their names having been preserved in oral traditions especially as handed down by the Syrian Nizārīs.[125] We have already made references to Muḥammad Shāh b. Muʾmin Shāh, the twenty-seventh imam of this line, who may be identified with Khudāwand Muḥammad. The latter led his Nizārī followers in Daylam, often from Alamūt, and played an active part in that region's alliances and conflicts until he was exiled to Sulṭāniyya by Tīmūr. Khudāwand Muḥammad's descendants, including perhaps his immediate successors, lived in Sulṭāniyya until the final decades of the 9th/15th century. Meanwhile, Muḥammad Shāh b. Muʾmin Shāh had been succeeded by his son Raḍī al-Dīn (d. 838/1434). The latter imam was, in turn, succeeded by Ṭāhir b. Raḍī al-Dīn (d. 868/1463–1464) and Raḍī al-Dīn II b. Ṭāhir, the thirtieth imam of this line and the father of the celebrated Shāh Ṭāhir Dakkanī. Imam Raḍī al-Dīn II may perhaps be identified with Shāh Raḍī al-Dīn, the Nizārī leader who early in the 10th/16th century appeared in Badakhshan, a mountainous region situated on the left bank of the upper reaches of the Oxus (Āmū Daryā), or more accurately of the Panj, the source of the Oxus.

The Ismāʿīlīs of Badakhshan and other parts of Central Asia, who remained particularly devoted to Nāṣir-i Khusraw, had remained outside the Nizārī–Mustaʿlī disputation and the confines of the Nizārī state. They acknowledged the Nizārī

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in Bombay, and a large retinue of attendants and servants who were lodged in suitable living quarters. Āghā Khān I attended the *jamāʿat-khāna* in Bombay on special religious occasions, and led the public prayers of the Khojas there. Every Saturday when in Bombay, he also held *durbar* (Persian, *darbār*), giving audience to his followers who received his blessings. In India, the Āghā Khān retained his close association with the British, and as a rare instance of its kind he was visited in his Bombay home, the Aga Hall, by the Prince of Wales when the future King Edward VII (1901–1910) was on a state visit to India. Āghā Khān I also came to be officially addressed as His Highness by the British.

As the spiritual head of a Muslim community, Āghā Khān I retained the protection of the British establishment in India, which strengthened his position and helped him in the exercise of his authority. During three decades of residence in Bombay, the imam gradually succeeded in exerting his direct control over the Nizārī Khojas through their traditional communal organization. He personally appointed the officers of the major Khoja congregations. These officers included a *mukhi* (pronounced *mukī*), who normally acted as the social and religious head of any local Khoja group, and his assistant, called *kamadia* (pronounced *kāmriyā*). Every Khoja community or *jamāʿat* of a certain size had its own *mukhi* and *kamadia*, with clearly defined duties, including the collection of religious dues, notably the *dassondh* or tithe, and presiding over religious ceremonies in the *jamāʿat-khāna* or assembly house. The terms *mukhi* and *kamadia*, derived from Sanskrit, and *jamāʿat-khāna* were in time adopted also by all non-Khoja Nizārī communities. The Nizārī imam was addressed as Sarkār Ṣāḥib and Pīr Salāmat by his followers in India.

Satpanth Ismāʿīlism, as has been noted, was influenced by Hindu elements, while the Khojas had been obliged to dissimulate for centuries as Sunnīs or Twelver Shīʿīs. In the settlement of their legal affairs, too, the Khojas, like certain other Muslim groups in India, had often resorted to Hindu customs rather than the provisions of Islamic law, especially in matters relating to inheritance. These factors were not particularly conducive to the formation of a clear and strong sense of Ismāʿīlī religious identity. In fact, dissident Khoja groups appeared intermittently during the nineteenth century, claiming Sunnī or Ithnāʿasharī heritage for the Khoja community. Under the circumstances, the first Āghā Khān established his religious authority in India only after some difficulty. He did, in fact, face periodical troubles from certain dissident members of the Khoja community. In 1829, while he was still in Persia, some Nizārī Khojas of Bombay had refused to pay the customary *dassondh* to him. As a result, he sent to Bombay a special representative, accompanied by his maternal grandmother, who filed a suit against the dissidents in the Bombay High Court. The suit was withdrawn in 1830. But the recusants were summoned before the *jamāʿat-khāna* in Bombay

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